

Draft

Chester Plan Study Area

Existing Conditions and Issues

A. Plan Boundaries (Map A)

The boundary of the Chester Plan study area includes the area presently included in the Chester Village Plan (1989). Generally, to the north, Route 288 is the boundary; to the east, Jefferson Davis Highway; Happy Hill and Baldwin Roads to the south; Branders Bridge Road to the southwest, Chalkley, Centralia, and Hopkins Roads to the northwest. Changes from the 1989 geography are: the addition of the Carver Heights neighborhood and the agriculturally zoned land in the historic Centralia area around Old Lane and Hopkins Road. The plan area is approximately 10.5 square miles, comprising about two percent of the land area of the county.

B. Magisterial Districts

The study area lies within the Bermuda and Dale Magisterial Districts.

C. Plan Status (Map A)

The study area includes the geography of the Chester Village Plan (adopted in 1989), with two small geographies (Carver Heights area and the historic Centralia area to the east of Hopkins Road) currently in the Central Area Plan (adopted in 1997). Citizen meetings were held to determine which, if any, areas should be added to the existing Chester Village Plan boundaries for study. There was community consensus on the addition of two areas. The Carver Heights area was added to address development concerns in the area. The Centralia area was added because of its significance as a historic village tied to Chester by the rail and road system. Additionally, the section of Centralia added to the study area is almost entirely zoned A, and is anticipated to have more development pressure in the future. There is strong citizen interest in a planning process for the area south of Chester along Harrowgate Road, but there was no agreement as to adding that area to this study area.

D. Issues

Since the adoption of the Chester Village Plan in 1989, numerous changes have occurred in the area. The widening of Route 10, commercial development along Jefferson Davis Highway, and changing residential and commercial land use patterns in the Chester area limit the applicability of the recommendations contained in the plan. Additionally, the existing plan is 14 years old, and is one of the older village plans in Chesterfield County.

E. Existing Zoning and Land Use Patterns (Maps B and C)

Existing zoning and land use patterns within the study area reflect a mix of residential land uses and zoning, with limited commercial, office and industrial land uses and zoning. Most of the

commercial zoning is along Routes 10 and 1, with some additional commercial zoning in the northern part of the study area along Chester Road.

Chester has a major railroad running generally north-south through the study area. This railroad line has a long history in the community, and still sees considerable passenger and freight traffic. This line is also one of the lines proposed for high-speed rail in the area.

The study area has two major streams within it, Ashton Creek, in the southern part of the study area and Great Branch. One tributary of Ashton Creek flows through the heart of the village, while another flows through the neighborhoods of Ashton, Reives Pointe, Lake Forest and Hidden Valley. Ashton Creek flows southeast until it joins the Appomattox River. Great Branch wraps around Lakewood Farms, and runs by Chesterbrook Farms and Glen Oaks, ending up in the northern part of the study area and then joining the James River by way of Proctor's Creek.

Significant public/semi-public uses within the area include 3 parks, Goyne Park on Ecoff Road, the Lowe's soccer complex on Route 1, and the Chester Linear Park, off of Ecoff Road. The area is also home to the new Chester Library on Centre Street. There are two fire stations in the area, Station 1, in the heart of the village, and Station 17, near the intersection of Routes 10 and 1. Also close to the intersection of Routes 10 and 1 is the Chester Station, which is the base of operations for the police officers working in the southern area of the county. There are three elementary schools in the study area: Curtis (on Route 10), Ecoff (on Ecoff Road) and Wells (on S. Chester Road). There is one middle school, Chester Middle, in the study area. There are two high schools in the study area, Thomas Dale and Community High School (which is housed in the old Carver Middle School building).

Table 1 – Chester Existing Land Use

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Commercial, Office, Industrial	195	3%
Residential	3,493	58%
Public/Semi-Public and Utility	386	6%
Vacant and Water	1,962	33%

Data compiled from the GPA Database (12/31/02)

As shown by the above table, Chester is a primarily residential community. Chester is typically viewed as a built-out, or mostly developed area. A review of existing land use for the study area, however, reveals that Chester has 1,893 vacant, or minimally improved acres. This represents 31% of the land area of Chester. Much of this vacant land is already zoned, which means that if the property owner chooses to develop it for the existing zoning, there is little opportunity for citizen input. The following table shows zoning for the vacant or minimally improved land in Chester.

Table 2 – Zoning for Vacant or Minimally Improved Land in Chester

Zoning	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural	548	29%
Residential	1,111	59%
Office/Industrial	74	4%
Commercial	160	8%

Table 2 illustrates that zoning exists for significant new development in Chester. While there is some vacant land that is currently zoned A, (approximately 9% of the study area), most of the vacant land is already zoned for development of some type. This existing zoning will have great impact on the future of the community. If there is interest in controlling or influencing development in a way that is contrary to the existing zoning, it will need to be accomplished outside of the traditional zoning process, either through changes in development standards or through a comprehensive rezoning of the area.

In addition to vacant and minimally improved land in Chester, there is also significant acreage in parcels that are over 5 acres with only one house. These parcels may be redeveloped in the future for more intense land use.

Table 3 – Zoning and Acreage for Residential Parcels of over 5 acres

Zoning	# of Parcels	Acres
Agricultural	44	748
Commercial and Office	4	69
Residential	20	223
Total	68	1,040

These parcels may be redeveloped for uses consistent with their underlying zoning without going through the zoning process. 138 acres of the residential zoned parcels are zoned for R-7, allowing single-family development at a higher density than most of the surrounding residential development.

The following table shows zoning and development figures for Chester. It highlights what percentage of each zoning category is currently developed and vacant.

Table 4 – Chester Zoning and Development

Zoning	Acres	% of Total	% of Countywide Acres	Developed Acres	Acres Vacant or with Minimal Improvements	% Vacant or Minimally Improved
Agricultural	1,757	29%	1%	1,158	599	34%
Residential	3,754	62%	5%	2,626	1,128	32%
Office/Industrial	95	2%	½%	20	75	79%
Commercial	429	7%	7%	269	160	37%
Total	6,035	*		4,073	1,962**	34%

*Total may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**Vacant or minimally improved also includes land that is covered by water. This comes to a total of 68 acres, 17 of which are zoned residential and 51 that are zoned A.

It is important to note the amount of vacant land in each zoning type. There are still substantial amounts of vacant land that is already zoned in the Chester study area for all types of land use. This existing zoning will impact the effect of the land use recommendations of the future Chester Plan.

F. Demographic Information

The following information comes from 2000 Census data combined with data from the annual Communities Report, assessment records, and field studies. All Census numbers are approximate, as Census and Plan boundaries do not precisely coincide, and block group data for the Chester area includes a small geography not contained within the Chester Plan boundaries. In the interest of accuracy, all Census data was used at the block group level, which is the most detailed level for which long form answers are available.

1. Population

The 2000 Census shows the population of the Chester plan area to be approximately 14,288. This is 5.4% of the overall county population of 266,549. Chester is 12.3% African-American/Black, compared to 17.8% for the entirety of Chesterfield County. It is 2.2% Asian, compared to 2.4% for all of Chesterfield County. Chester is 1.4% Hispanic, compared to 2.9% countywide.

Chester has approximately 4.6% of people that are foreign born. This compares to 5.2% countywide. There are a series of questions on the Census long form that address ability to speak English. Responses to these questions indicate that Chester has a small population of Asian immigrants that do not speak English well or not at all (estimated number: 52). There is a smaller group of Hispanics that do not speak English well, but none that responded that they could not speak English at all (estimated number: 14).

Chester is slightly more stable in terms of people remaining in their homes at a greater rate than the rest of Chesterfield County. In 2000, approximately 58.2% of Chester residents over 5 years of age were in the same home as 1995. Countywide, the percentage of residents over 5 years of age in the same residence as 1995 was 54.8%.

Of the population over age 25 (9,396), 87.6% have at least a high school degree or its equivalent. 29.6% have a Bachelors degree or greater. Chester also had an estimated 1,803 veterans.

2. Household Income

The 2000 median household income for census block groups that encompass the study area was approximately \$59,666, compared to the Chesterfield County median of \$58,537.

3. Housing

The study area has a mix of older and new neighborhoods and a mix of housing types. There were 5,572 total housing units, of which 5,397 were occupied. 175 units were vacant at the time of the Census. Of the occupied units, 77% were owner occupied. The median year built for homes in Chester was 1978.

4. Residential Development Patterns (Map D)

Residential development within the area is characterized primarily by single-family homes on acreage parcels and in subdivisions, apartments in multi-family complexes, a few duplexes and three mobile homes in one mobile home park.

- Single-family residences on acreage parcels are scattered throughout the study area. Many are zoned for more intense development than is currently on the property. The existing zoning may allow development that is not compatible with adjacent development, especially in regard to density and setbacks.
- Single-family residences in subdivisions include older and newer neighborhoods, from the established village with homes dating to the late 1800's and early 1900's to new subdivisions still being developed.
- There are 29 duplexes in Chester. Most of these are located along Mason Avenue and Spring Avenue, a few along Richmond Street and the rest are scattered throughout the area. Many of these are visibly duplexes, however, there are others that appear to be single-family residences from the exterior.
- There are several apartment complexes in Chester, ranging in size from four units to 261 for a total of 787 apartments in Chester. There are two additional complexes planned and zoned, one at Chester Village Green with 140 approved units, and a second on Womack Road with 216 units.

Table 5 – Residential Development in Chester

Housing Type	# of units in Chester	% of total units in Chester	% of units Countywide
Single family on acreage parcels	584	11%	6%
Single family in subdivisions	4,052	75%	5%
Single family in mobile home parks	3	0%	0%
Multi-family residences	787	15%	5%
Total	5,426	**	

*Data is compiled from the December 2002 GPA database.

**May not add to 100% due to rounding.

G. Economic Information

1. Commercial Development Patterns (Map E)

Commercial uses primarily consist of retail, services and office uses. Commercial development is concentrated along Route 1, Route 10, and at the intersection of Chester Road and Route 288. The commercial development along Route 1 is a mix of old and new, with development dating from Jefferson Davis Highway's history as the north-south throughway along the east coast. There is also significant new commercial development, including shopping centers, restaurants

and hotels. Commercial development along Route 10 is predominantly made up of service uses in renovated homes. There is one shopping center in the center of the village, and some newer commercial zoning and development to the west of the village. Currently, there is one shopping center and some smaller commercial parcels at the intersection of Route 288 and Chester Road, but there is zoning in place for additional commercial development in that area.

2. Industrial Development Patterns (Map E)

There is very little industrial development in the Chester area. There is zoning for industrial uses in the western section of the study area, close to Route 10. There is also some zoning for industrial uses in the northern portion of the study area.

3. Employment and Jobs

2000 Census data showed approximately 7,600 workers living in the Chester area. Virginia Employment Commission data from June 2001 showed approximately 1,960 jobs. VEC data does not include all jobs, as any multiple location businesses or organizations are all shown with one location (for example, all school employees are shown as working at the School Board location). The data shows clearly, however, that there are many more workers than jobs in Chester.

4. Tax Revenue

It is difficult to obtain tax information about specific geographies. Business revenue figures, which are used to calculate business taxes by the Commissioner of Revenue's office, are confidential. One area of taxation that is public information, and offers insight into the tax revenue situation for a specific area is real estate taxes. The combined total of real estate assessments in the Chester area is approximately \$834 million. This represents approximately 4.6% of the overall total of real estate assessments for Chesterfield County (including land and improvements). The overall population of Chester is 14,288, representing approximately 5.5% of the total population of the county. These estimates suggest that the area generates less per capita real estate tax revenue than the county as a whole.

H. Environmental Features (Map F)

The study area is characterized by rolling and gently sloped topography. Steep slopes, floodplains and resource protection areas (RPA's) are generally concentrated around the two major creeks in the area, Aston Creek and Great Branch. These environmentally sensitive areas have impacts on the use of property, both from the perspective of property owner choices and governmental regulation. Additional floodplains may exist in the study area, that are yet undetermined, due to lack of development in the area. Further analysis of these areas would occur with new development. Management of environmental features should occur on a site-by-site basis as development occurs.

I. Utilities

Public Water and Wastewater Facilities

The area encompassed by the Chester Plan is served by an extensive system of water distribution and wastewater collection lines. The majority of the area is supplied by the Appomattox River Water Authority, with a small area supplied by the City of Richmond. Wastewater treatment for the entire area is provided by the Proctors Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. The County's Water and Wastewater Facilities Plan reflects necessary improvements to the public systems to insure that adequate water pressure and capacity will be available to serve existing and future development.

Although the existing water and wastewater system extends throughout the Plan area, additional water and wastewater lines will be necessary to serve future development in some areas, as well as provide service to existing residential areas now served by private wells and septic tank/drainfields. Included among areas that will need water line extensions is Chalkley Road, south of Deep Forest Road; Brander's Bridge Road, between Bradley Bridge Road and the new Happy Hill Road (and along the Old Happy Hill Road); and both sides of Iron Bridge Road, between Chalkley Road and Womack Road. Subdivisions which do not have public wastewater service include Chesterbrook Farms, Hillandale, Buxton, Lakewood Farms, Autumn Oaks, Dalewood and Gay Farms. One significant area that lacks public wastewater service is the area roughly bounded by Branders Bridge Road, Old Happy Hill Road, South Chester Road, and West Hundred Road. This area is a portion of the Ashton Creek drainage basin, and would require extension from an existing wastewater line, which currently terminates east of South Chester Road. This extension would cross South Chester Road and Harrowgate Road, and would have to be routed around Rieve's Pond.

It is anticipated that water and wastewater line extensions associated with new development will be funded by the developers. The County does not fund the extension of public utilities into areas of existing development. If the majority of property owners in a specific area desire public water and/or wastewater service the Board of Supervisors may consider creation of an assessment district. Under this policy, the funds are appropriated for a specific project and all owners whose property abut the utility line will be assessed an equal share of the total project costs. The assessment will be recorded as a lien on the property, and the owners can pay the assessment in one lump sum payment, or chose bi-annual payments for up to a 20-year period.

J. Fire Service

There are two fire stations within the study area geography, located in the center of the village, and at the intersection of Routes 10 and 1. The Chester station is located on Old Hundred Road. The Dutch Gap station is located on Route 10, just west of Jefferson Davis Highway. The draft Public Facilities Plan recommends adding full-time ambulance service to both of these stations.

K. Schools

The study area contains three Elementary schools, Curtis, Ecoff, and Wells. A small portion of the study area is served by Marguerite Christian Elementary School, located in the Walthall area. The area contains one middle school, Chester Middle School, and is also served by Salem Church and Carver Middle Schools. Thomas Dale High School is located in the heart of the community, and Chesterfield Community High School, a countywide specialty high school is located in the previous Carver Middle School building. A portion of the area is also served by L. C. Bird High School. Needs for additional school facilities are addressed as part of the Public Facilities Plan.

L. Libraries

The study area is served by the new Chester Library on Centre Street. The library has 15,500 square feet and was constructed in 2001. This library is anticipated to meet Chester's needs for library space for the next 20 years. One issue that is still to be resolved is the use of the previous Chester Library building located at the intersection of Harrowgate Road and Werth Street. Currently, the building is being used for county offices for a special project. However, upon completion of that project, there is no stated use for the building. There has been community interest in the use of the building and the local newspaper has conducted an informal survey on its use, showing community support for a use such as a community center.

M. Parks and Recreation

The study area contains one 49 acre community park, Goyne Park, located on Ecoff Road, adjacent to Ecoff Elementary School. The study area is also home to the Chester Linear Park, an adapted railroad right of way. Needs for future park facilities are addressed as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Public Facilities Plan. Chester citizens have shown interest in additional pedestrian and bikeway routes.

N. Transportation

The Chester Plan area is served by a fairly extensive network of Primary and Secondary roads. These roads are in the State Highway system. Maintenance and signing of the roads, decisions on speed limits, and traffic signal installation and timing, are all the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The Primary roads in the Chester Plan area are:

- Route 10 - extends east and west through the center of the Chester Plan area. Widened from two to four lanes in the early 1990's, Route 10 is currently carrying approximately 23,000 to 33,000 vehicles per day through Chester. There are eight signalized intersections along Route 10 from Jefferson Davis Highway to Branders Bridge Road. The five signals in the "center" of Chester -- Osborne Road, Old Centralia Road, Chester Road/Winfree Street, Harrowgate Road/Centre Street, and Chestertowne Road -- are in a coordinated signal system.

- Harrowgate Road and Chester Road - provides the main north/south routes through the Chester Plan area. Both roads carry approximately 10,000 vehicles per day.
- Jefferson Davis Highway – forms part of the eastern boundary of the Chester Plan area. The section of Jefferson Davis Highway just north of Route 10 has seen considerable commercial development in recent years. Jefferson Davis Highway north of Route 10 currently carries approximately 22,000 vehicles per day.
- Route 288 – forms the northern boundary of the Chester Plan area. This four-lane limited access highway currently carries approximately 38,000 vehicles per day.

The following Table lists Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes on the major roads in the Chester Plan area over the five year period from 1999 to 2003:

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Volumes
Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

Primary Routes

Road	Rte #	Count Located Between	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Route 288	288	Jeff Davis to Chester Road	21,000	26,000	33,492	-	37,748
Jefferson Davis Hwy	1/301	Route 10 and Route 288	-	-	22,847	-	-
Route 10	10	Jeff Davis Highway and Chester Road	24,000	26,000	30,021	-	32,269
		Chester Road and Harrowgate Road	26,000	26,000	26,811	-	31,058
		Harrowgate Road & Branders Bridge Road	-	-	23,439	-	22,728
		Branders Bridge Road and Lewis Road	-	-	27,324	-	33,345
Harrowgate Road	144	Happy Hill Road and Route 10	-	9,093	-	-	10,699
Chester Road	144/145	Route 10 and Centralia Road	10,000	9,800	-	-	10,653
		Centralia Road and Route 288	-	-	15,097	19,373	-
Centralia Road	145	Hopkins Road and Chester Road	-	10,641	-	-	-

Secondary Routes

Road	Rte #	Count Located Between	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Branders Bridge	625	W Hundred & Bradley Bridge	5,476	7,230	-	-	8,336
		Bradley Bridge & Happy Hill	4,616	5,652	-	-	6,207
Chalkley Road	632	Centralia and Ecoff	2,556	4,035	-	4,693	-
		Ecoff and Route 10	4,390	-	-	-	-
Curtis Street	616	Route 10 and Winfree Street	-	3,799	-	-	3,831
		Winfree Street & South Chester Rd	-	3,623	-	-	3,813
Curtis Street	1520	South Chester Rd & Harrowgate	-	1,350	-	1,400	-
Ecoff Avenue	1502	Chalkley and Goyne Park	2,058	-	-	-	-
		Goyne Park and Route 10	-	2,295	-	-	4,146
Happy Hill Road	619	Branders Bridge & Harrowgate	-	2,949	-	3,200	-
		Harrowgate and S Chester	-	4,779	-	-	5,106
Old Centralia Road	609	north of Route 10	-	4,317	-	3,921	-
Old Centralia Road	717	east of Chester Road	-	3,523	-	3,985	-
Osborne Road	616	Rt 10 and Jeff Davis Highway	3,937	4,093	-	-	4,570
South Chester Road	616	Curtis Street and Happy Hill Road	-	2,874	-	-	2,944

Thoroughfare Plan (see Map) - The County Thoroughfare Plan, which was originally adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1989, identifies right-of-way classifications of existing roads, and right-of-way classifications and general alignments of future roads.

The C.S.X. Rail-line - extends north/south through the center of Chester. At-grade rail crossings are located at Centralia Road, Curtis Street, and West Street.

Traffic Accident Data – The following two tables show the number of accidents reported in each of the last three years at selected intersections, and along selected road segments, in the Plan area:

Reported Traffic Accidents at Selected Major Intersections

2001, 2002, 2003

Source: Chesterfield County Police Department

Road	Intersection with	Accident per year		
		2001	2002	2003
Jefferson Davis Highway	Route 10	45	46	48
	Osborne Road	8	12	13
Route 10	Breckenridge Shopping Center	4	2	3
	Parker Lane	4	1	1
	Osborne Road/Curtis Street	8	4	10
	Old Centralia Road	8	2	8
	Chester Road/Winfree Street	13	18	16
	Harrowgate Road/Centre Street	14	19	9
	Chestertowne Road	7	14	3
	Ecoff Avenue	6	3	2
	Branders Bridge Road	6	6	7
	Chalkley Road/South Chalkley Road	21	10	19
Harrowgate Road	Curtis Street	6	5	1
	Happy Hill Road	10	11	4

Reported Traffic Accidents on Selected Road Segments

2001, 2002, 2003

Source: Chesterfield County Police Department

Road	From/To	Accidents per year		
		2001	2002	2003
Harrowgate Road	Route 10 to Curtis Street	21	12	11
	Curtis Street to Happy Hill Road	11	4	17
Chester Road	Route 10 to Centralia Road	11	10	13
	Centralia Road to Route 288	17	16	20
Osborne Road	Route 10 to Jefferson Davis Highway	3	6	11
Chalkley Road	Route 10 to Ecoff Avenue	3	4	4
	Ecoff Avenue to Red Leaf Road	2	5	3
	Red Leaf Road to Centralia Road	7	5	3
Ecoff Avenue	Route 10 to Goyne Park	5	1	4
	Goyne Park to Chalkley Road	0	1	2
Old Centralia Road	Route 10 to Mineola	10	6	10
	Mineola to Chester Road	1	2	1
Curtis Street	Harrowgate Road to R.R. Crossing	6	1	4
	at the R.R. Crossing	0	2	1
	R.R. Crossing to Route 10	8	4	9
South Chester Road	Curtis Street to Happy Hill Road	5	8	4
Centralia Road	Chalkley Road to Chester Road	7	4	9
Branders Bridge Road	Route 10 to Bradley Bridge Road	4	5	6
	Bradley Bridge Road to Old Happy Hill Road	9	3	6
Old Happy Hill Road	Branders Bridge Road to Happy Hill Road	0	0	0
Happy Hill Road	Harrowgate Road to Old Happy Hill Road	3	3	4

The County Transportation Department reviews reported accidents on an annual basis. When a specific location is identified where safety improvements would be beneficial, the County applies for funding under the State's Hazard Elimination Safety (HES) program.

The above locations will be reviewed in detail as part of the HES process. None are currently classified as high accident locations.

The following HES projects in the Chester Plan area have recently been completed:

- Chalkley Road at Centralia Road – signal installation and turn lanes
- Harrowgate Road at Curtis Street – turn lane improvements

The following HES projects have been selected for funding:

- Chalkley Road south of Inge Wood Circle – improve curve and shoulders
- Hopkins Road west of Old Lane – improve curve and shoulders

Bridge and Culvert Structures - The Federal Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program provides funding for bridge and culvert rehabilitation in addition to replacement projects. The purpose of the Program is to begin repairing bridges and culverts before they deteriorate into a critical state. The Program assigns a “Sufficiency Rating” to these structures based on several factors, including structural adequacy, functional obsolescence, and essentiality for public use. If the Sufficiency Rating for a structure is less than 80, but more than 50, the structure is eligible for rehabilitation funding. A structure rated less than 50 qualifies for rehabilitation or complete replacement.

Based on information provided by VDOT, only one structure in the Chester Plan area would qualify for rehabilitation work, based on a rating of 50 and 80:

Chester Road (Route 144) over Hamlin Creek, just south of the Centralia Road/Old Centralia Road intersection (74.9 rating).

No Through Truck Prohibitions - There are three roads in the Chester Plan area that have been designated as No Through Truck Traffic routes:

- Buckingham Street between Route 10 and Harrowgate Road
- Old Centralia Road between Route 10 and Chester Road
- Osborne Road between Route 10 and Jefferson Davis Highway

In order to violate these prohibitions, trucks must travel the entire length of the restricted route without stopping for business purposes. Trucks that have business along these routes are authorized to use the roads.

O. Historic and Cultural Resources

A brief history of Chester (summarized from the Jeffrey O’Dell book, Chesterfield County: Early Architecture and Historic Sites):

Chester was founded by two gentlemen, Charles Stebbins and Joseph Snead, who also developed the Town of Ashland. They platted the streets and lots for the village in the mid 1850’s at the intersection of two railroads. The streets drawn by Stebbins and Snead are: Petersburg, Winfree, Richmond and Percival streets, running approximately east-west. The cross streets are: Dodomeade, Gill, Curtis, West, Snead, Stebbin, and Daniel. The village had many points to recommend it- convenient railroad access, easy road access to the Petersburg-Richmond Turnpike, and bordering current Route 10, which was, even then, a major thoroughfare. The hills, streams and springs were as attractive then as they are today.

There was early development in Chester, including a hotel, two schools, and a church. Development was likely slowed by the Civil War. One battle of the Civil War came close to the new village. There was a skirmish at Yellow House (between the YMCA and the cemetery) where the Confederates repelled a Union force seeking to destroy the railroad line.

After the war, O'Dell reports that there was an influx on northern families searching for money rumored to be buried by General Benjamin Butler. No money was found, and some of these new arrivals left soon after.

The late 1870's to the 1880's were a busy time for Chester. During that decade, Saint John's Episcopal church was built, the Presbyterian church was built (by a member with his own hands and funds), the Methodist church group was on Winfree Street, and the girls school began in the old hotel building.

Development continued at the end of the 19th century, including a lumber mill, a brick and clay company and new railroad headquarters for the Tidewater and Western Railroad.

The turn of the century saw increased residential development, including some very large and stately homes in the village. A new bank opened in the village as well, which was notable due to the scarcity of banks outside of the city. A school to serve the entire congressional district was constructed at the current site of Chester Middle School.

Population estimates for 1900 was 30 families. By 1912, informal estimates of population were between 600-700. Growth continued steadily throughout the beginning of the 20th century, until the 1950's, when Chester saw increased growth due to additional jobs available along Jefferson Davis Highway. Since the 1950's, Chester has had significant growth each decade, with expanding boundaries of the village and new types of uses.

The study area also includes the historic settlement of Centralia. Centralia was a train stop on the line from Richmond, and was a bustling neighborhood at the time of regular train service. It has several historic homes still existing today, and the benefit of the existing setting, which retains its sense of history.

Condition of historic and cultural resources:

There are very few commercial structures left in Chester of significance. The hotel and railroad station are gone, though the local Kiwanis club has obtained the railroad site in order to preserve it for public access and parks. Overall, however, Chester has been very fortunate in retaining its historic resources. Field studies indicate that Chester has lost no additional identified historic structures since Jeff O'Dell's surveys of 1976-1978.

Chester retains 60 structures catalogued by Jeff O'Dell. There may be other structures that should also be noted and retained. The structures are concentrated in the village and at Centralia. See Map H for location.

In Chesterfield County, there are 35 historic landmarks that have been designated through the county's Historic Districts and Landmarks Ordinance. Eleven of these designated landmarks are in Chester. The Ordinance provides regulatory protection to a structure by providing review of alterations. Addition to the list is voluntary, and is managed by the Preservation Committee.

These are the designated structures in Chester.

Name	Address
Chalkley Residence	4600 Centralia Road
Chester Collegiate Institute	12133 Richmond Road
Chester Presbyterian Church	3424 W. Hundred Road
Circle Oaks	4510 Centralia Road
Clark Residence	4515 Centralia Road
Grymes House	4540 Centralia Road
Oakden	3601 Curtis Street
Perdue House	12200 Percival Street
Ragland House	4626 Centralia Road
Tyler House	12124 Richmond Street
Yellow House	3001 West Hundred Road

P. Opportunities

The Plan for Chesterfield incorporates certain guidelines that promote development patterns that facilitate the orderly, harmonious, predictable and efficient use of Chesterfield County's most limited resource- the 446.5 square miles of land and water within its boundaries. These guidelines, as they apply to specific Plan areas of the county, are outlined in the Introduction to the Plan for Chesterfield and become the basis for the Goals and Recommendations of Plan amendments. In general, the guidelines include the following principles: promote a reasonable approach to growth management; provide for economic development; shape the character of development; protect important cultural, historic and environmental resources; and promote healthy neighborhoods.

Promote a reasonable approach to growth management:

A countywide pattern of development directs growth to appropriate locations within existing, developed areas, such as the study area, and encourages fringe development of these areas as an orderly extension of growth. The resulting growth pattern ensures efficient use of land by decreasing sprawl. This pattern further promotes cost-effective use of existing public facilities by promoting infill development, encourages economical extensions of public facilities by minimizing leapfrog development, and protects and preserves existing residential areas by encouraging appropriate new development and redevelopment in proximity to such areas. This growth pattern also reduces development pressure on areas within the county where the Comprehensive Plan suggests growth should be deferred until orderly extensions of utilities are provided.

The Introduction to the Plan for Chesterfield suggests that the study area is an area where development should be encouraged as part of the county's commitment to promoting orderly growth and development patterns. There is still vacant land in Chester, as well as significant acreage that would allow denser development than currently exists, if redevelopment occurs. The pattern and type of new development will impact the overall health of the community and the county goals of orderly growth. Infill development should generally reflect the density and type of existing adjacent development, particularly when new development will affect

established residential neighborhoods, balancing the goal of orderly growth management and the goal for protecting our existing communities. Determining how to best accomplish this in Chester, given the existing pattern of development and zoning will be a challenge.

Provide for economic development:

Chesterfield County recognizes that business and real estate tax revenues generate a significant part of the resources needed to provide high quality services for its citizens. The county further recognizes that abundant employment opportunities close to home benefit citizens. In particular, industrial, office and other employment generating uses provide tax revenues that defray the costs of providing county services to residents. Well-located and planned commercial and industrial uses benefit all residents of Chesterfield County.

Chester is primarily a residential community. The pattern of development does not offer many opportunities for large scale industrial or office development. Much of the demand for large scale industrial or office development in Chesterfield County will be met in the areas near Chester, along Jefferson Davis Highway and in the Eastern area of the county. There are many opportunities for small-scale businesses in the community. Planning should ensure that these opportunities are found and preserved to enhance the overall health of the community. Land uses along Route 10 need to be studied and considered to determine the best non-residential uses for that area. Additional attention will be needed to determine the market and viability for additional retail in the community, considering the changing market and development along Jefferson Davis Highway.

Shape the character of development:

Chesterfield County recognizes that new construction and redevelopment should adhere to design guidelines that ensure that commercial development, when viewed from public places (such as along roads), have visual appeal. In this manner, new construction and redevelopment will contribute to the overall appearance and livability of the community, making surrounding properties more desirable for development and existing residential areas more attractive as places to live.

Office, commercial and industrial development in the study area is regulated by zoning conditions and Zoning Ordinance requirements. Specifically, most properties in the study area are subject to Emerging Growth standards in the Zoning Ordinance. The section of the study area on the west side of Jefferson Davis Highway is in the Post Development area, which has less stringent standards than Emerging Growth. Additional standards to development apply for the Route 10 corridor area. As part of the implementation of the existing Chester Village Plan, four overlay districts were adopted. These districts have village type standards, with reduced setbacks in some areas, specified street light types and architectural standards.

With so much land already zoned, and redevelopment playing a large part of change in land uses in Chester, design standards are particularly important to achieving a desired appearance for the village.

Protect important environmental, cultural and historic resources:

Chester contains two major stream valleys. There are several tributaries to these streams, as well as slopes and wetlands associated with the surrounding land. Development around the stream valleys must be planned to take advantage of the amenity, while protecting it for future citizens.

Chester and Centralia are special places that retain their sense of history, even as they grow. They each have many historic structures, most of which are in good condition. As development occurs, these structures should be preserved and maintained where possible. In addition to preserving the structure, there are areas where maintaining the historical context will be especially important. Many of the structures in the village of Chester are located in established neighborhoods, and thus, their context is well established and protected. The Centralia neighborhood may be more vulnerable to losing its context if development occurs within the core of the historic area.

Promote healthy neighborhoods:

The preservation and maintenance of developed residential and commercial areas of the county contributes to the overall health of the county. In addition, older neighborhoods, if well maintained, can lend themselves to the creation of unique, and identifiable places within the county. These places become the neighborhoods that people remember and gravitate to. They become the center of the community. Chester and Centralia are two of those places. It is important to plan and make decisions that will support and enhance the Chester village and Centralia.

Q. Development Constraints

The existing development pattern in the study area suggests the market for development in the community. Chester is a primarily residential area. There is commercial on the eastern edge, along Jefferson Davis Highway and along Route 10. The following have been identified as potential development constraints:

- Stream valley, wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes may cause some parcels to be undesirable to develop or limit access to parcels.
- Lot sizes, existing structures, and access to roadways may make development or redevelopment of parcels along Route 10 difficult and/or expensive.
- Chester is a residential community, with little opportunity for large-scale economic development.
- Historic structures, community context and a sense of place contribute to Chester's long-term viability and future vision. However, protecting these community values may make redevelopment and new development more difficult in some cases. Community partnerships between the business and residential community will need to be fostered so that new development can balance between community needs for economic development and community character.

R. Development Potential

As noted herein, the study area still has almost 1/3 of its area undeveloped. Additionally, there is land that may be redeveloped for more intense uses. The following have been tentatively identified as possible assets for future development in the study area:

- The community has excellent access by rail and by road to the rest of the county and the metropolitan area.
- There has been increased interest in the Chester community, its history and its sense of place in the last several years.
- Residential development in the area, new commercial development along the Jefferson Davis Highway and redevelopment patterns along Route 10 indicate that the area has a healthy market.